

Growing the Links Between Farms and Schools

A How-To Guidebook for Pennsylvania Farmers, Schools and Communities



The Center for

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GROWING THE LINKS BETWEEN FARMS AND SCHOOLS: A HOW-TO GUIDEBOOK FOR PENNSYLVANIA FARMERS, SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES

By:

Clare Hinrichs, Ph.D., Kai Schafft, Ph.D., Dara Bloom and Erin McHenry-Sorber
Pennsylvania State University

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FARM TO SCHOOL PROGRAMS IN PENNSYLVANIA

This guidebook has been developed to support and coordinate efforts across Pennsylvania to increase the connections between farms and schools. It is written for schools and school districts—and especially for food service directors, teachers, administrators, school nurses, and school health and wellness committees. It is also written for farmers and suppliers who are interested in participating but still unsure about when or how to develop relationships with local schools.

This guidebook recognizes that both schools and farmers need to work together to make farm to school programs work effectively.

Food service directors need to understand the situation facing today's farmers; farmers need to understand the needs and interests of today's school food services. In short, growing the links between farms and schools requires information, coordination, and communication. With all these ingredients, real benefits can be obtained from developing farm to school connections, including improved health and educational, economic, and environmental gains.

More specifically, students benefit by having access to fresher, better tasting and more healthful food choices, learning how food choices affect nutrition and health, and gaining a wider appreciation of local and regional agriculture. Schools benefit by having access to fresh, healthful foods, possibly acquiring foods at reduced costs, gaining new opportunities to meet statewide science curriculum requirements, and supporting the local economy and community. Farmers benefit by gaining access to new, local markets, helping youth and other community mem-

bers learn more about local agriculture, and keeping their land in farming.

This guidebook describes various farm to school efforts and activities and shows how they work best when they connect to the needs and capacities of schools and communities. Real-life case studies demonstrate how schools and producers are working together in Pennsylvania to build effective farm to school programs. This guidebook also offers suggestions to both schools and farmers to help avoid common pitfalls.

The remainder of this guidebook is organized in the following way. Section 1 describes how both farming and schooling have changed in Pennsylvania over the last few decades, and what that means for building effective connections between farms and schools.

Sections 2 and 3 are directed to schools and the ways that farm to school efforts can be developed to match local needs and resources. Section 4 is directed to farmers and considers ways they can develop effective relationships with schools.

Although it's useful to divide the guidebook in this way, it's also something of a false division. Because farm to school programs depend heavily on good connections between different groups of people, farmers can benefit from understanding the school perspective. And schools certainly can benefit from understanding the farmer perspective. That is why this guidebook emphasizes multiple stakeholders, all of whom can share in making farm to school programs happen in Pennsylvania. Successful farm to school programs often begin with an idea and some conversation. Then they take off with a coordination of efforts.

This guidebook also contains several useful appendices, including an at-a-glance look at the seasonal availability of Pennsylvania's fruits and vegetables and listings of resources for schools and farms.

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SECTION 1: WHAT SCHOOLS AND FARMERS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT EACH OTHER

What Foods are Available from Pennsylvania Producers?

Pennsylvania is among the top 10 states in production of several fruits and vegetables. In 2006, Pennsylvania was third nationwide in production for fresh market pumpkins, fourth for both apples and grapes, fifth for both tart cherries and pears, sixth for peaches, fresh strawberries, and processing snap beans, seventh for fresh sweet corn and cantaloupes, and eighth for fresh tomatoes and processing sweet corn. Not all of these products are necessarily produced in large quantities in all regions of Pennsylvania. And, of course, given the Pennsylvania growing season, not all of these products will be available year-round.

Appendix A presents a chart showing the general harvest season for various types of produce in Pennsylvania.

About Schools: Understanding Food Service and Other Opportunities

In general, school food services are expected to be self-reliant and their budgets are separate from those of local school districts. Therefore, they depend entirely on income from selling meals and snacks as well as on state and federal reimbursements to make up their budgets. The National School Lunch Program, which provides nutritional meals free or at reduced prices to income-eligible school-aged children, is a federally funded program included in the Farm Bill and administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). School food service budgets depend greatly on the reimbursements they receive from the USDA through this program, which corresponds to the number of children that are eligible for free and reduced-price meals. In addition to federal cash reimbursements, schools that participate in the National School Lunch Program receive free commodity foods through USDA. These commodities are known as “entitlement” foods, and schools also receive “bonus” commodities that are made available according to what agricultural products are in surplus, and on market conditions. States choose entitlement foods from a list of available products that is provided by USDA. These foods usually include fruits, vegetables, eggs, cheese and meat products.

Changes in School Food Services

School food service operations have changed a great deal during the last 30 to 40 years. One of the major challenges for farm to school programs is working within current restrictions of today’s school food service operations. While meals prepared on site from

scratch used to be the rule, food services today, especially in larger districts, often depend on pre-prepared food. Many schools now have fewer food service staff and sometimes more limited kitchen facilities than in the past. They are often no longer equipped to process non-standard fresh produce, even if they would like to. Some schools no longer have their own full working kitchens and instead receive meals from central kitchens. These circumstances mean that many schools now use pre-cut vegetables and canned fruit to meet the nutritional requirements of their students.

Currently more than half of Pennsylvania school food services are self-managed, which means they are required to support themselves financially. The other half is run through contracts to outside food service companies, which often operate with their own rules and restrictions. Either way, tight budgets mean less and less of the food being served is prepared on site.

School Wellness Policies

Schools’ tight budgets and limited resources certainly pose challenges. However, recent national legislation creates some new opportunities. This legislation requires schools participating in the federal school meal program to teach students ways of increasing their overall wellness. As of 2006-2007, schools must have wellness policies, which then lay out wellness goals and plans for meeting them. The school lunch itself is under federal guidelines and is not the official focus of school-level wellness policies. In addition to an emphasis on healthful snacking and guidelines for “competitive foods” (any foods served during the school day that are not part of the school lunch), wellness policies address many aspects of nutrition and physical education.

School wellness committees working on wellness policies

Why Apples?

In a survey conducted by Penn State University in the spring of 2007, food service directors in Pennsylvania public schools were asked about their local purchasing practices. The results showed that apples are one of the most popular items that schools buy locally. So, why apples and why not other types of produce? For one thing, the apple season coincides well with the school year, while other products tend to be at their peak during the summer



months when school is out. Also, because most schools order produce once every week, apples are a good product because they can be stored easily. Apples also require minimum processing, unlike other types of fruits and vegetables. Certainly apples are not the only local product that schools can use, but they are a good place to start.

often include a variety of stakeholders. They must include parents and teachers, in addition to administrators, but members of the public would likely be welcomed, if they ask to be included. Many schools are addressing the school lunch, beyond the purview of the wellness policy, by making their own changes, such as shifting to whole grain breads or baking fries rather than frying them. Wellness committee meetings could provide a good forum for introducing the idea of developing some type of farm to school program, especially if parents and teachers are eager to get involved.

Summer Feeding Programs

Many schools also run feeding programs during the summer months. This is a time when farmers face fewer limitations on the kinds and quantities of produce they can offer. In addition, summer feeding programs usually do not serve as many students as schools do during the regular school year. This can be a good time to set up a trial arrangement, where producers and food service employees can see how making the connection between schools and farms works. Based on the experience, the arrangement can be fine-tuned before expanding the program into the fall and spring.

SECTION 2: FARM TO SCHOOL IN PENNSYLVANIA TAKES MANY FORMS

How can schools create successful farm to school (FTS) programs? It depends first on what they want to achieve. For example, some schools may be mainly interested in increasing the amount of fresh fruits and vegetables served in the cafeteria. Others may want to have more school-based health and nutrition education, or to take schoolchildren out for farm visits or tours. Some may choose to focus on holding special events in the school featuring local foods and farm products.

Next, schools must consider what resources are available for FTS activities and what level of coordination each school hopes to achieve. Some schools may see the FTS program as a classroom-level effort, while others may see it at the school or district level. In some cases, a combination of all of these may be the best way to go.

Here is the main point: effective FTS activities will look different in different school communities. Their design and implementation are based on local needs, interests, and resources—and also on local limitations. FTS programs in Pennsylvania are not all the same and they don't need to be. Instead, FTS efforts should fit the school's or district's local context. The key to successful FTS efforts is to make them work for those involved.

This section takes a look at some of the different FTS activities already happening in Pennsylvania. Each of the four school districts discussed below faces different conditions and different possibilities. Each account highlights just one interesting feature of FTS, even though these districts also engage in others facets of FTS. It is important to remember that there is no single "right" way to develop or structure FTS.

Mifflin County School District: Classroom Education about Food and Agriculture

With two high schools, three middle schools, and eight elementary schools, Mifflin County School District is a large rural school district, serving about 5,800 students. Mifflin is one of the few school districts in Pennsylvania that covers an entire county.

Because of the historical prominence of agriculture in

the district, it is not surprising that regional dairies have long supplied the district's yearly milk contract. However, in many ways, Mifflin County's FTS activity focuses more on education than on food procurement. One of the champions of agricultural education in this district is one of the third-grade teachers who finds creative ways to teach the standards using agriculture as a theme.

Drawing upon her own personal experience in developing her curriculum, as well as using her connection to the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau and Penn State's "Ag in the Classroom" program (see Appendix B for more information about Ag in the Classroom as well as other curricular and educational resources), she provides lessons on sheep shearing, chicken embryo development, composting, nature trails, plant identification, hog farming, and nutrition. This teacher has helped other teachers learn more about teaching agriculture, too.

A third-grade teacher's perspective on Ag in the Classroom

"I get different teachers from the district every year to attend Ag in the Classroom, and since it's sponsored by the Farm Bureau, they don't have to pay a penny. Through Ag in the Classroom, they get materials and a network of support. Teachers who aren't familiar with farming don't know how to incorporate agriculture, but once they get a taste for it, they see how to apply ag in any field – social studies, health, language, arts, and math."

With cooperation from the Farm Bureau, the school organizes an annual field trip to two farms, including a dairy farm, where students learn about food production, distribution and preparation from farm to table. This program has been running for nearly a decade now. Mifflin schools also use the Farm Bureau's Mobile Ag Lab, which visits the school for a week at a time and gives students of all ages a chance to do some hands-on learning about agricultural topics.

Minersville Area School District: Making the Most of “Apple Crunch Day”

Located in eastern Pennsylvania, Minersville is a small district, in terms of both square miles and student enrollment. Minersville is rural and has a history and tradition of coal-mining more so than agriculture.

Because there is not much agriculture within the immediate area, the Minersville district contracts with two small-scale distributors in the next county. These distributors, in turn, make about 15 percent of their purchases locally, including from several fruit tree orchards within a 25-mile radius and 15 to 20 vegetable farmers within a 40-mile radius. Purchases of fresh fruits and vegetables from these small distributors help the food service director fulfill the school district’s wellness policy, which was written with the help of the contract company that runs the food service.

The food service director’s overall commitment to providing both more nutritious meals and nutrition education, in keeping with the school district’s wellness policy, brought her in contact with the Pennsylvania Advocates for Nutrition and Activity (PANA). As a result, one of the real hallmarks of the FTS effort at Minersville is its Apple Crunch Day. This event is part of Apple Crunch, a state-wide activity organized by PANA during National Nutrition Month to encourage children and families to eat apples as part of a nutritious diet.

Apple Crunch Day at Minersville includes a demonstration of a cider press by a local farmer for the elementary school, and a special dessert made with local apples and served by Family and Consumer Science high school students. The cider-making demonstration helps students to understand that even processed foods can come from farms, not just factories. The food service director is careful to provide pasteurized cider for students to taste, since the cider made during the demonstration doesn’t meet food safety standards.

Pittsburgh Public Schools: Growing School Gardens

The Pittsburgh School District is one of Pennsylvania’s largest, serving about 13,000 lunches per day. All the preparation for the elementary schools is done at a central site; the meals are prepared one day, delivered the next, and served on the third day. Each school in the district has a cooler and an oven to finish cooking the meals. Although this system creates some efficiencies for a large and complex district food service, there is a trade-off in the difficulty it creates for serving

A local farmer on his participation in Minersville’s Apple Crunch Day

“Some have no idea how cider is made, so it’s nice to bring them in and talk about the different blends of apples. They say: ‘How can you ever get juice out of them?’, and we press the apple cider, and they’re amazed you’re getting all this juice out of it. They say: ‘I never drank apple cider before, and it actually tastes pretty good!’.”

fresh fruits and vegetables. To incorporate more fresh produce, the district has turned to bulk and pre-made salads.

The scale of the district and the organization of the food service make it challenging to purchase from small, local farms. But FTS activities and interest are alive and well in the Pittsburgh public schools. Here they take the form of some innovative work with “Edible Schoolyards” at two of the elementary schools. These initiatives have developed in partnership with Grow Pittsburgh, a program organized through Penn State Cooperative Extension that supports urban agriculture in the Pittsburgh area.

Students were reluctant at first to get dirty, as many of them had little prior exposure to gardens or gardening. But the experience of planting, harvesting, cooking, and eating food produced in the Edible Schoolyards has made some big impressions. Grow Pittsburgh staff also conduct activities in the classroom to complement the garden project, including lessons on composting and how to grow vegetables.

The program also provides the opportunity for summer interns from the high school to take care of the gardens when school is out. They have the responsibility of developing a nutrition class and teaching nutrition to the younger students attending summer classes. At harvest time, Grow Pittsburgh wheels a propane stove into the garden (because the schools do not have full kitchens), where a professional chef, who is also a parent, prepares food from the garden for the children.

In addition to teaching students about nutrition and the environment, the garden helps to connect the school to the community. Community workdays bring people together, and community involvement helps to maintain the gardens as safe, beautiful spaces within this urban environment.

One of the Grow Pittsburgh program coordinators outlines the benefits of school gardens: “I guess I see it as three levels of education going on in the garden. One is nutrition. The students are learning about where their food



A farmer’s thoughts on selling to schools

“I think, typically, you’ll get a better-tasting, fresher product with a local product. I think the better it tastes, the more kids are inclined to pick it up and eat it.”

comes from. They're learning about the different tastes between things that are fresh and pulled right out of the garden, and things that have been processed. The other is environmental. Students see their role in the food cycle and they see that their actions affect the viability of the soil and the production of the vegetables. And third is character development. Teaching about nutrition and about the cycles and responsible living, responsible ways of interacting with the Earth and our food, naturally leads into character development."

State College Area School District: Local Fruits and Vegetables on the School Menu

Located in Centre County, an area with significant farming activity, the State College Area School District can be singled out for its growing commitment to purchasing more locally grown fruits and vegetables.

The food service director purchases produce from a local farm for the summer feeding program and during the school year. During the late summer and fall seasons, she gets watermelon, peaches, pumpkins, and gourds, and, like many districts in Pennsylvania, a good supply of apples. The food service director is open to trying new products and expanding her local purchases, and finds that, when she buys in season, the local produce is actually cheaper than the produce she gets from her usual vendor.

Whenever local produce is offered as part of the lunch menu, she makes a special point of noting on the district school menu that it comes from a local producer. That is a small way to educate children about local foods, and it is name recognition and community advertising that local farmers appreciate.

In addition to expanding purchases of local produce for the cafeteria district-wide, the food service director also increased the amount of local produce she could buy for two of the district's elementary schools through the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program of USDA. This program brings fresh fruits and vegetables into the classroom for afternoon snack time and helps schools make time for nutrition education.

The food service director for the State College Area School District said that, ideally, lunchtime should be treated as another class. Lunch is not about forcing kids to eat something, but encouraging them to try something new (even if they spit it out). She said that if lunchtime were viewed as another important educational opportunity during the school day, food service programs would be given more money, and it would be easier for them to operate without as many constraints.

Summing Up

These examples come from very different school districts and show the very different ways that FTS programs are developing in these districts. It is not surprising that these programs vary both by their scale—from the classroom-level efforts in Mifflin County School District to the district-wide efforts in State College—and by their purposes, whether mainly cafeteria-based, education-based, or something in between. And yet all accomplish important goals in their districts and schools.

The next section offers some practical advice about how schools can decide on the kind of program(s) that would work best for them and how to gather the resources and build the support to make it happen.

SECTION 3: TAILORING FARM TO SCHOOL TO MEET DIFFERENT NEEDS

As mentioned earlier, some FTS initiatives are oriented more towards purchasing locally produced foods and including them in the school menu, while others focus on educational activities, such as farm visits, for students. Some involve combinations of both approaches.

Similarly, some FTS efforts involve entire districts and others focus more at the school or classroom level. Again, there is no right or wrong approach. Rather, each school or district should figure out what makes the most sense by asking what is feasible, who is interested, and what are the goals.

Identifying Goals

School stakeholders who are interested in starting an FTS program should first consider the program goals, since different stakeholders may have different goals. For example, a school nurse or a member of a school wellness committee may be interested in FTS because he or she is concerned about the lack of fresh fruits and vegetables served in the school cafeteria. A teacher, in contrast, may

be more interested in developing new "hands-on" educational activities that teach children important information about health and nutrition while at the same time addressing state curricular standards. School administrators may be drawn to FTS because of the potential to build stronger connections with the local community by supporting local farms and arranging school-wide events, such as an "Apple Crunch Day," that celebrate Pennsylvania agriculture and local foods and promote good nutrition.

So, the shape of the farm to school program may vary depending on the goals of the stakeholders that are involved. These goals, however, may not be mutually exclusive but complementary. No matter who takes the initial interest in FTS, it is worth identifying others within the school community who may want to develop an FTS program.

Identifying Stakeholders

Who are the key stakeholders within a school or school district and what are their goals? FTS efforts may be

strengthened and additional excitement and support may be generated by identifying and talking with school stakeholders. Some of the most important school stakeholders include: the district food service director, members of the school wellness committee, the district superintendent, teachers, parents' groups, and students.

It is important to remember that successful FTS efforts build on connections and grow links. Successful efforts can be started and goals agreed upon by making connections with people in the school community. Some very successful FTS efforts have been led mainly by one person, such as a food service director. However, local FTS efforts supported by multiple people or groups have a better chance of succeeding.

Identifying Resources

There are many organizations, especially non-profits, interested in promoting both agriculture and nutrition that offer resources. A number of these resources are listed at the end of the guidebook in Appendix C. By working in partnership with an outside organization, schools may be able to access resources and receive support that make it easier to incorporate local food than if they were working independently.

The remainder of this chapter provides suggestions and models for FTS efforts that can be tailored to meet local needs. The first part describes efforts oriented mainly around increasing local foods served in the school cafeteria. The second part talks about efforts that are more educational in nature. However, the two can go hand-in-hand. It depends on what is right for each particular classroom, school or district.

Farm to School as a Local Procurement Initiative

Some FTS efforts focus mainly on increasing the amount of fresh local foods served to students. For school districts interested in developing FTS programs as part of the food service, several different options are available. Two of the most basic alternatives are direct purchasing and buying from a distributor. These options are described first and include some advantages and challenges. Several additional approaches are described afterward.

Direct Purchasing

Direct purchasing refers to buying directly from the farmer. Schools and farmers both can benefit from establishing direct purchasing relationships. Prices may be more reasonable for both producers and schools by eliminating the middleman. Many food service directors find local food to be very reasonably priced, although produce shipped from elsewhere may be cheaper depending on the season. Buying directly gives food service directors and other school personnel a chance to get to know the producer and support the local economy. It may also be easier

A Step Toward Wellness: Fundraisers

Many schools now are trying to phase unhealthy foods out of vending machines and the cafeteria. But what can be done about those school fundraisers selling candy or other commercial snacks to raise money for worthy school activities? Some schools are experimenting with fundraising alternatives. For example, the Bald Eagle Area School District is working to establish a new fundraiser using locally produced cheese. Perhaps this could start a new trend, where an assortment of local apples or some other locally made specialty food becomes the star of the next school fundraiser.

to address any concerns when school personnel know the person who produces the food.

Some service-related issues may pose challenges when purchasing directly from a local producer, rather than an intermediary. Availability of product and capacity for processing, quality control, storage and delivery can vary from one individual producer to another. For example, smaller farmers may find it difficult to make deliveries, although creative solutions are possible when all parties are open to new ideas.

It may not be possible for local farmers to process foods exactly how schools are accustomed, but many schools find they can adjust their expectations and adapt with a little resourcefulness. For example, one Pennsylvania school district food service director plans her menus accordingly: on days when her employees will be busy with significant prep work of local produce on one dish, the other dishes will require minimal preparation time.

It is important also for school food service personnel to meet with the farmer to check how typical menu and produce needs match the harvest season. This ensures that purchasing is coordinated around what is available locally at any given time. School food service directors need to remember that many producers have cold storage that allows them to continue to offer some products, particularly apples, long after the harvest.

Purchasing from a Local Distributor

For schools and districts that may not have the time or staff to coordinate their buying directly from local producers, buying from a local distributor may be the way to go. This arrangement may help address important issues, such as delivery, and may fit better with a food service's existing purchasing system. Because an extra step between the farm and the table has been added, the price may be a little higher. In some cases, however, schools may value the convenient services that a local distributor provides. Finding local processed food through a local distributor can be a challenge, but students will receive the benefits of freshness, and the school's purchasing will support the local economy.

Local distributors are usually open to helping purchasers

Food Safety Concerns and Local Produce

Many food service directors trust local producers since they know them personally, and because they know producers must follow certain standards to sell to commercial markets. However, with recent food safety scares over fresh produce, some food service directors are hesitant to buy directly from a farmer. While the USDA commodity service requires producers to receive Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) certification to sell to commercial markets, some farmers may not complete the certification process as it is expensive and very rigorous, and not required if farmers sell directly to food service operations.

The Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture and Iowa State University Extension have compiled some questions that food service directors can ask potential suppliers to learn more about practices affecting on-farm food safety. These basic questions can help food service directors understand the food safety practices that farmers use, and increase confidence even when a producer doesn't have GAP certification. (For more on GAP certification, see Page 17).

Farm and Production Practices

1. Is water tested annually?
2. Are test records on file?
3. Are wells protected from contamination?
4. If raw manure is incorporated into the soil, is it added at least two weeks prior to planting or 120 days prior to harvest?
5. Are baskets, totes, or other containers used to collect or transport food products cleaned and sanitized before each use?
6. Are packing materials used for food products clean?
7. Are packing containers appropriate for food contact?
8. Are food products kept at appropriate temperatures?
9. Is the source of wash water used on food products and storage containers protected from cross contamination (e.g. manure, livestock, pets)?
10. Are food products washed, rinsed and sanitized?
11. Are food product contact surfaces washed, rinsed and sanitized at the end of each day?
12. Is there a pest control program in place?
13. Is the food product packing facility enclosed?

Worker Sanitation and Safety

1. Are workers trained about proper sanitation and hygiene practices?
2. Are handwashing facilities available to workers?
3. Do workers wash hands at appropriate times – after eating, smoking and using the restroom?
4. Do workers limit bare hand contact with foods?
5. Are workers excluded from handling food products if they are ill?
6. Do workers put on clean aprons or clothes prior to washing and packing product?
7. Are different gloves worn for harvesting and packing?

compare prices, and, as demand for local products increases, obtaining local produce should get easier. To ensure that the produce purchased is coming from within the state, purchasers can ask for the *PA Preferred* label (PA Preferred, a program the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, helps consumers identify products of Pennsylvania agriculture). Schools can also obtain colorful posters from the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture to advertise support of this program. When buying from a local wholesale distributor, it is important to understand that everything they sell is not necessarily local. School food service personnel should ask which produce comes from a nearby farm just to be sure.

Produce Auctions

Produce auctions play an especially important role in rural areas and can be a great source for buying local produce and connecting with local farmers. Schools also are less likely to have problems getting the quantities of food they are seeking. The competitive bidding style of produce auctions helps keep prices reasonable and quality high. Produce auctions can be a convenient place to find and get in touch with local producers, since in some areas they are one of the only markets for local produce. Auctions often serve as a central meeting place and can help school districts get in touch with traditional farmers who may not have the same type of communication or delivery resources as other farmers.

Marketing Alliances and Cooperatives

Sometimes producers form cooperatives to coordinate their sales and to invest in the technology needed to compete with wholesale distributors. Produce purchased through a cooperative still comes straight from the farmer, but by pooling their resources, producers in a cooperative may be able to overcome some of the challenges that are usually part of purchasing directly. A great example is Lancaster Farm Fresh, an Organic Farmer's Cooperative, which sources food to several FTS programs in Philadelphia that were funded by the Healthy Farms, Healthy Schools Grant Program.

The Department of Defense Fresh Program

This program allows schools to use USDA commodity entitlement funds to buy fresh produce for school meals through the Department of Defense's distribution network. As mentioned earlier, many school food service programs depend on USDA's commodity donations to supplement their budgets. Often these commodities come pre-processed, but under the Department of Defense Fresh program, schools can choose to apply USDA commodity funds to procuring fresh fruits and vegetables. The Department of Defense has emphasized buying from small to mid-sized family farms. Depending on the number of local growers certified for this program, it can be a great way to get local produce into the school cafeteria. While Pennsylvania has had limited participation in this program, it has potential to grow and serve more Pennsylvanians if schools continue to express interest.

Forager

Some schools or districts have allocated funds to hire a "forager." This person's job is to identify prospective local producers and to organize the FTS program. While foragers work for the school system, they need to have the time, resources and inclination to familiarize themselves with the needs and concerns of local producers. Hiring a forager is typically initiated with the help of an outside non-profit organization and funded through grants. The issue of making such a position self-sustaining is a challenge.

Farm to School as an Educational Initiative

Education around FTS activities can take on countless forms. With agriculture becoming part of state science standards, more and more schools are incorporating themes of food and farming into their curriculum. By its very nature, FTS encourages students and teachers to explore both nutrition and agriculture. Both of these topics can be addressed in science, math, social studies, art, and English classes. Many resources are designed to help teachers apply nutrition and agricultural education to federally mandated standards (See Appendix B for a full list of curriculum-based resources). The following are programs, activities,

Apples in Pennsylvania History and Culture

Apples are Pennsylvania to the core! Cider was a staple drink in colonial times, and legend has it that Johnny Appleseed used Pennsylvania apples for the famous seeds that he planted up and down the Ohio River. The process of making cider offers a teachable moment about physics, and fun facts about apples can include nutritional and historical information. Today, many Pennsylvania orchards remain independent family operations that trace their legacy back through several generations, making apples a great way to connect to the community and support family farms.



and resources that can help facilitate and fund FTS as an educational initiative.

PA Healthy Farms, Healthy Schools Grant Program

In 2006, the Pennsylvania General Assembly passed Act 184, which outlined the Healthy Farms, Healthy Schools Grant Program. This program is run by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture and is designed to introduce kindergarten students and their parents to good nutrition and local agriculture through local foods. Funding supports classroom-based projects that include taste-testing, visiting local farms, and other interesting activities.

The grant is based on a model developed by The Food Trust, a non-profit organization based in Philadelphia. The Food Trust has been a driving force behind FTS programs in Pennsylvania. In 2004, the Food Trust developed a pilot program, the Kindergarten Initiative. This program focused on a holistic approach to nutrition and agricultural education, which included healthy snacks, curriculum integration, farm tours and parent and community involvement. As a result of the well-documented success of this program, the Pennsylvania Healthy Farms, Healthy Schools Grant Program was born. In its first year, a total of 46 FTS programs were funded throughout the state.

About half of these programs are located in Philadelphia, and The Food Trust continues to be involved as a facilitator for about 27 schools. Although the Kindergarten Initiative is the model for this program, schools across the state have been creative in implementing programs according to their own needs and abilities. For example, one school in Philadelphia partnered with a local coffee shop to help overcome the challenge of processing local food for snacks. In the winter months, many schools have looked beyond fruits and vegetables to other Pennsylvania agricultural products, such as fresh yogurt and other dairy products from sustainably raised cows. A special relationship with the Lancaster Farm Fresh Organic Farmer's Cooperative helps participating schools in Philadelphia source

certified organic and sustainable local products.

In addition to this work, The Food Trust serves as the regional coordinator for the Community Food Security Coalition's (CFSC) Farm to School Network. By forming this network, the CFSC hopes to raise the national profile of FTS programs and to foster policy support. The Food Trust is a valuable resource for anyone interested in learning more about FTS, and especially for schools that are interested in implementing a Healthy Farms, Healthy Schools grant. Its Kindergarten Initiative Toolkit is available online and comes with a helpful CD with various resources, including lesson plans, guides to incorporating food and agriculture into the standards, recipes, and ideas for encouraging parent participation. The Food Trust also occasionally hosts seminars and workshops for food service directors as well as cooking demonstrations for parents.

Apple Crunch

With growing public and policy attention to wellness, many Pennsylvania schools are finding the Pennsylvania Advocates for Nutrition and Activity (PANA) to be a great resource. PANA's popular nutrition activity, Apple Crunch, lends itself particularly well to local food promotion and education. Schools participate in varying ways that might include cider making demonstrations, field trips to orchards, and, of course, eating lots of fresh, Pennsylvania grown apples.

USDA Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program

The 2002 Farm Bill created a pilot program to provide free fresh fruit and vegetable snacks to students in participating schools. In 2004, Congress made the program permanent and extended the grant to Pennsylvania. Separate and distinct from the existing school lunch program, the snack program is intended to increase children's fruit and vegetable consumption and introduce different types of fruits and vegetables to kids. Schools serve the fruits and vegetables as snacks during the day and may use that time to teach the students about the foods they are eating, as well as the importance of good nutrition. Participating schools are required to publicize

the availability of fresh fruit, dried fruit, and fresh vegetables to the student body. This program provides an excellent opportunity for working with local farmers and educating students about the types of produce grown in the area. In Pennsylvania, the Pennsylvania Department of Education is responsible for administering this program.

Farm Bureau's Ag in the Classroom and Mobile Ag Education Science Lab

Ag in the Classroom provides teacher training over the summer and during school vacations. These workshops help teachers learn how to integrate hands-on agricultural projects into the curriculum, give teachers materials and ideas for fun projects, and provide a network of teachers and agricultural resources both locally and across the state. Teachers can also choose to earn Act 48 hours and/or Penn State graduate credits for their participation.

The mobile lab offers a great way to help teachers meet the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Science and Technology, and/or Environment and Ecology standards. The 32-foot trailer comes with 12 work stations and provides children an opportunity to perform hands-on experiments that might be difficult to set up in a traditional classroom setting. The mobile lab comes with supplies, resources, and a certified teacher, and travels to different schools every week. Experiments address issues such as Pennsylvania primary commodities, the environment, biotechnology, food and fiber.

School Gardens

School gardens, sometimes called "edible schoolyards," can take various forms and do not have to follow any one set pattern to be successful. Gardens not only provide a hands-on learning experience for children to expand their knowledge about nutrition and agriculture, but can also be a space for community and parent involvement. When children become involved in growing and caring for what they eat, they gain a whole new appreciation for their connection to food and are often more willing to try new foods. (See Appendix D for curricular and funding resources for school gardens.)

A Food Service Director Who's Not Afraid to Get His Hands Dirty

The food service director in Bald Eagle Area School District sees his responsibilities for school nutrition as reaching far beyond the cafeteria. Because of his involvement on the district's wellness committee, he was able to include FTS activities as one goal of the wellness policy. These FTS activities include buying from a local orchard and a local potato farmer, forming a student food committee, starting a school garden, and most recently, creating a school orchard. The food service director was even able to get the trees donated for his orchard project. He sees the orchard and the garden both as educational resources and as sources of free food for the cafeteria. School orchards look beautiful, may be easier to maintain than school gardens, and provide a source of food either for the cafeteria or for fundraising. This is one great example of how cafeteria-based and educational initiatives can be brought together under the FTS umbrella.

SECTION 4: FROM THE FARMER'S PERSPECTIVE

This section is written especially for farmers and other producers who might be interested in cultivating schools as an active market for the foods they produce. Stakeholders from schools are encouraged to use this section as a resource as well, because understanding FTS from the perspective of producers can only help the efforts of food service directors, administrators, educators, and other school stakeholders who want to develop an FTS program.

As a Farmer, Why Should I be Interested in Farm to School?

In addition to the benefit of reducing risk by diversifying market outlets, FTS participation can also offer non-monetary benefits to farmers. These benefits include increased public visibility and good will through community involvement. However, it is important for producers to weigh the financial costs and benefits against these less tangible factors when deciding if the school market is feasible.

Many FTS activities only focus on local fruits and vegetables, because of the National School Lunch Program. The program enables schools to receive items, such as meat, eggs and cheese, through USDA's commodity service at reduced prices or for free, which can make it more difficult for smaller or medium-scale farmers who sell similar items, to compete. On the other hand, most of the fruits and vegetables that schools receive through the commodity entitlement program come canned or processed, which encourages schools to look for local sources of fresh produce.

Given the importance of dairy in Pennsylvania and the seasonality of fresh fruits and vegetables, some schools are trying to make connections with smaller, local dairies to expand their students' knowledge about different dairy products. For example, in Philadelphia, some kindergarten classes receive freshly made local yogurt and cheese as snacks in the classroom.

However, the favorable price structure of USDA commodities and limited cafeteria budgets can make it difficult for even interested schools to work with smaller regional dairy farms and processors, particularly if the schools need larger quantities of products. When it comes to fresh fruits and vegetables, schools often have much more freedom in their buying practices.

The recent concern over diet-related health problems in children also provides a window of opportunity for producers as many schools are shifting their menus to offer more fresh fruits and vegetables. As peak production season in Pennsylvania does not coincide with the school year for most products, this may be a challenge; however, food service directors will continue to look for ways to offer fresher, tastier produce. If kids like what they eat, school food services are more likely to keep buying it,

which can work to the advantage of local producers.

Some Common Issues

Before presenting the possible models that FTS activities can take, let's first consider some common issues. The model of FTS that works best in a given situation depends on the resources and capabilities of the producer, as well as the needs of the school.

If a producer is interested in supplying the cafeteria, it is critical to get to know the food service director and to understand how he or she runs the cafeteria. This person is the primary point of contact within any given school district in terms of food served in the cafeteria. In most cases, the food service director is in charge of both menu planning and purchasing, although in larger districts these responsibilities may be divided. By calling the school or visiting the district's website, producers can easily find out who is in charge of food purchasing.

Sometimes schools are more interested in incorporating local food and agriculture at the classroom level than the cafeteria level. Many of the same issues are involved, but the structure of the school activities and the complexities of a producer's operation will determine which issues are the most important.

Schools can be very flexible with some FTS criteria but less flexible with others. For example, schools may be very open to trying different varieties of produce but be very specific about delivery requirements. It is important for producers to communicate with the school to understand exactly what the school expects from them and how much they are capable of doing.

The following are some common issues that producers may encounter when dealing directly with schools:

Availability: Food service directors usually plan their menus one month ahead of time. This can allow both the school food service and the producer to plan ahead, according to what the school may need and what the producer reasonably can offer. Food service directors have a good idea about the amount of fresh fruits and vegetables their students will eat, so it is important for producers to be able to estimate their ability to meet this requirement.

Bidding and Prices: Although schools have many budgetary restrictions, many food service directors sympathize with farmers and are interested in establish-



A farmer's perspective on the farmer-school relationship

"You know, I think it really hits it on the head because it's the community supporting the community. And from the grower's standpoint, you know you need to be flexible...it's a give and take situation. I think from our standpoint, we're gaining more than just the sale of the fruit, because it lets more people know we're here, and it exposes kids to different varieties. There's more to it than the economic gain, and that's really what it comes down to when you're serving the area."

ing fair prices and a reliable working relationship. It is important for producers to contact the school to understand its purchasing system. For example, larger school districts often will bid their entire operation to one produce company, while in smaller schools the food service director has the freedom *not* to bid out the contract as long as the total purchase is below a small purchase threshold. The system for obtaining quotes when purchasing below the threshold varies, so producers should contact the local school district to find out how to participate. When purchases are below this threshold, food service directors have much more freedom to make purchasing decisions based on quality, and not just price, although they are still bound by their budgets. However, even when food service operations put out bids, most districts also allow the food service director some flexibility, with possible exceptions based on past buying experiences.

Processing: In most cases, schools are more likely to buy processed products, such as shredded cabbage or carrots. Processing can be done by a local processor, producer, or a cooperative of producers. This is one way to gain entry to this market. Guidelines for washing and handling fruits and vegetables are included under Good Agricultural Practices audits (See Appendix C for more on GAP certification). The FDA has updated guidelines for fresh cut fruits and vegetables, although these are meant for guidance and are not officially regulated. For value-added products, such as canned or baked goods, information about health codes is available on the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Food Safety website under "Guidelines for Wholesale/Manufacturing/Processing Food Establishments." In general, the food safety requirements for schools are the same as those for any commercial market. For items that require less processing, such as apples, schools often seek smaller sized items. Most producers who are already selling to a commercial market probably will find that these grading requirements are easy to meet. (See Appendix C for more on FDA guidelines and Department of Agriculture links.)

Quality: As is the case with any market, it is important for producers to maintain a high level of quality when selling to schools. Children, in particular, can be picky customers. Some food service directors will expect food to arrive washed and packaged similar to that from the food industry; others are more flexible and will be able to wash products themselves.

Delivery: Often schools need to have produce delivered to them. While this can be a drawback, given the labor time and transportation costs involved, it can also work to a producer's advantage if the school is located nearby or is close to a pre-existing delivery route. Also, some schools have central staging areas and do not require delivery to each individual building, which makes delivery somewhat easier. Some schools may even be able to pick up the produce, so it is important for producers to communicate with schools and discuss all possible options.

Storage: School kitchens usually have very limited space. Producers who have their own cold storage and who can make deliveries once or twice a week may have an advantage. Producers with access to better storage also will be able to offer their products into the winter months.

Distribution Models for Cafeterias

For producers and schools interested in incorporating fresh fruits and vegetables into school menus, there are several ways to make connections. If selling direct does not work for a particular operation, outside organizations and companies can mediate the relationship. Choosing the right model depends on which issues listed earlier are most critical, given the specific context. It is also important to remember that, if the cafeteria presents too many challenges to local supplying right now, other options are to start small or even work outside of food service groups (see the sub-section below for advantages and disadvantages of various options).

Direct Marketing (also known as "Direct Wholesale")

Advantages: Many growers prefer to sell their products directly because they can get a better price than selling through a wholesaler. Socially, some producers like to be involved in the community and believe that developing a higher community profile will lead to other potential economic benefits. When producers sell directly, they can get feedback straight from the customers, which can help them tailor their activities to fit the school's preferences and maintain a good relationship. Producers often find that, although food service directors face many budgetary constraints, they are interested in supporting local businesses and expect to pay fair prices.

Disadvantages: The downside to direct marketing is that busy producers may be called upon to perform some activities they might not necessarily do for other custom-

A Role for Local Distributors

As demand for local products increases, local, small-scale distributors can be an important link in strengthening regional food systems. The local wholesale companies that played a role in the case studies mentioned earlier said that local schools account for 8 to 10 percent of their sales. Schools are a reliable market because, in contrast to restaurants, their demand does not fluctuate much with the economy.

As more schools express interest in local produce, distributors will need to find ways to respond to the demand. Working as a local distributor can be challenging because of price expectations on the part of local schools and local producers. It is important to talk to potential producers, as many will be willing to meet the market price for their products when possible. While sourcing from several small farmers may be a burden, it also gives the distributor a chance to shop around for the best prices, quality, and availability.

ers. There may be extra work with storage, handling and delivery, the services otherwise provided by a wholesaler or distributor. Direct marketing may yield a better price than selling to a wholesaler, but it may be lower than that of retail sales at a farmers' market or roadside stand. While schools can offer a market that remains steady, even in a changing economy, they do occasionally receive government-subsidized produce and may not need local farm products at all times.

Selling Through a Local Wholesale Distributor

Advantages: This option may be good for mid-sized operations that do not have the time to address school cafeteria regulations and needs. For smaller growers, wholesalers may be a better market if there are any doubts about the growers' ability to provide enough produce to the school, because a wholesaler can source from several different farms. Some local wholesalers may be willing to develop contracts to guarantee both the quantity and price of the product. Smaller, local distributors are more likely to be willing to enter a relationship with smaller farm operations than larger wholesale companies.

Disadvantages: One disadvantage of selling to wholesale distributors is that they offer producers a lower price than both direct wholesale and retailing. Although some local wholesalers are interested in developing contract relationships, many are not, which could make this relationship unstable. Also, distributors expect producers to meet specific packing needs and price structures.

Produce Auctions

Advantages: This can be a good marketing alternative for small farmers, especially in rural areas without many other options. Finding local producers can sometimes be a challenge for food service directors, and produce auctions can provide a place for them to meet with local producers and develop a working relationship. At an auction, food service directors also have the opportunity to buy from several different producers, which may help overcome concerns about product availability. This environment can also be a way for producers and food service directors to meet halfway on delivery, and to determine the price of products.

Disadvantages: The auction is best used as a starting point for a more committed buying relationship. It is important for producers and food service directors to be able to communicate about their needs and capabilities, and this can't happen without a relationship.

Marketing Alliances or Cooperatives

Advantages: Joining forces with other producers helps to address some of the major obstacles to FTS programs, including processing and distribution. USDA's Rural Business Cooperative Service offers funding to producers to start cooperatives, as do other development agencies, such as the Keystone Development Center. This funding can help organized farmers to invest in local infrastructure. (See box, A Cooperative Success, on Page 17).

Disadvantages: Getting organized can take a great deal of time and planning. It is important to do a cost/benefit analysis to make sure that the potential market is worth the investment. Also, processed items may require additional health and safety certifications, depending on the item.

Southern growers obviously have a seasonal advantage, but their cooperative model still provides lessons for Pennsylvania. For example, considering a regionally specific product, like apples, it is not hard to imagine how producers might join forces to better market their apples to schools. Perhaps an apple growers' cooperative in Pennsylvania could follow the New North Florida Cooperative's example and invest in equipment to help process and package individually-sized cider juice packs, which could be a product that schools would like to buy.

One major obstacle to FTS programs is the lack of local

Produce Auctions and a Motivated Mother

In the Bellwood-Antis School District, a local family started selling produce from their one-acre farm at a farm stand and supplemented the limited amount they grew with purchases from Amish and Mennonite farmers at a nearby farmers' auction. Because of family connections, they soon started providing produce to the school. As a very small grower, this farming family could not supply the school by itself, but by buying extra produce, it was able to market to the school and teach its children valuable lessons about how to run a small produce business.

processing and infrastructure. These could be overcome if producers pooled their resources and followed a cooperative model.

Cooperatives still can be great models even if additional processing is not included. In serving schools, they can help consolidate delivery and availability issues. Although many organic cooperatives are more interested in serving markets where they can get a higher profit margin, some find that serving schools is more emotionally rewarding and are willing to take a small price cut.

Department of Defense Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program

Advantages: Schools receive commodity entitlements of donated USDA products through the National School Lunch Program. Schools also can use these commodity allotments to buy fresh produce through the Department of Defense's (DoD) supply program, which also serves veterans' hospitals and prisons. Currently, few schools in Pennsylvania take full advantage of this program, because they must use an approved produce supplier, and, to include local produce, local growers need to be certified. However, if more local producers were enrolled in the DoD program, the relationship between local farmers and schools could be enhanced. The DoD Fresh Program encourages purchasing from small and mid-sized family farms, and working through the DoD can help producers gain credibility. Also, since schools can use government funds to purchase produce, which they cannot do when buying directly from a producer, it can help growers gain access to a market that might otherwise be challenging to enter.

Disadvantages: Some participating producers elsewhere in the country have found that DoD was slow in paying farmers and reimbursing schools. Also, it may take more coordination between the Department of Agriculture, schools, and the DoD Fresh Program before this model gets off the ground in Pennsylvania.

Starting Small—Venturing Outside the Cafeteria

Not all FTS activities revolve around the cafeteria. Some schools are more interested in implementing classroom-based initiatives, while some may want to use other programs as trials before trying to coordinate a cafeteria effort. In many cases, it may make more sense, at least initially, to start small. For a full description of some classroom-based projects that include procurement, see Section 3.

Agricultural Education and the Role of Farmers

It is important to keep in mind that FTS activities involve making connections that often go beyond a commercial relationship. As agriculture makes its way into the curriculum, more schools may look to farmers to

help them expand students' knowledge. Sometimes farmer involvement includes farm tours, while in other cases a farmer may be invited into the classroom. Some farmers may also host community dinners or picnics. As agricultural education becomes more incorporated into the required science standards, teachers and administrators should turn to farmer expertise to make lessons relevant and accurate.

Advantages: Farm tours have the possibility of providing some additional income for producers, depending on the time and resources they are willing to invest. Many farmers want to be involved in education to help raise awareness about the issues related to farming among the next generation. Knowledge and awareness can go a long way in helping children understand and appreciate small, local farms and farmers.

Disadvantages: To offer farm tours, producers should have liability insurance. Many farmers, however, consider liability insurance a deterrent. Participating in agricultural education can also be a burden for farmers during busy planting and harvesting seasons, and some farmers already work enough hours without being called upon to do even more. Although teachers and students can reap huge benefits from experiencing a farm first-hand, farmers need to consider their own limitations and perhaps look to the off-season to participate.

Certification and Insurance Issues

Liability Insurance

Most producers are aware of the need for liability insurance. This is especially true for any grower who hosts field trips on his/her property. Many schools and wholesalers may assume that a producer has adequate insurance and not even ask, but it is important for producers to have coverage in case anything goes wrong. Producers should be sure to ask the school about its required minimum level of insurance.

According to Drake University's Agricultural Law Center in Iowa, farmers should consider four basic types of insurance:

- **Premises liability insurance:** This covers producers for injuries or damage that may occur on their property and is important for producers that host field trips or hay rides;
- **Worker's compensation insurance:** This covers injuries to employees;
- **Physical damage coverage:** This protects the operation against losses as a result of damage to property of the operation, such as machinery and buildings; and
- **Product liability insurance:** This covers injuries that stem from using products produced on the farm. The basic premise of product liability is that companies have a duty to protect consumers from potential hazards, even if the damage is primarily caused by consumer negligence or deliberate misuses.

The amount of insurance that a producer needs will

A Cooperative Success

One FTS success story comes out of the South East region. The New North Florida Cooperative works with small farmers in Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Arkansas. Because these farmers joined together, they were able to take advantage of various grants offered through USDA and other development agencies. These grants helped them develop a local infrastructure to meet schools' needs by purchasing coolers, refrigerated trucks and processing equipment. By offering a regionally specific food that many schools cannot get from other vendors (collard greens), and offering this item washed, cut, and bagged, the cooperative has established itself as a reliable, trustworthy supplier. The cooperative now offers several other items in addition to collard greens, and although it got its initial start-up monies through grants, it is now practically self-sufficient.

depend on the type and size of his/her operation and the nature of the product being marketed. Because every situation is different, producers should consult with an attorney and an insurance agent to guide them in choosing the correct combination of insurance.

Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) Certification

All producers who want to sell to USDA or federal programs (such as the USDA's commodity purchasing program), and many major retailers, must have Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) certification, which is also known as Good Handling Practices (GHP), or the Fresh Products Audit Verification Program (under the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture). This voluntary certification is intended to strengthen consumer confidence in food produced on U.S. farms. GAP certification addresses seven general areas: water quality; manure and municipal

biosolids; worker health and hygiene; field sanitation; adjacent and previous land use; harvesting/field packing/transportation; and worker training. However, all the areas may not apply to all types of farms. Good agricultural practices guidelines place emphasis on traceability and good record keeping, in addition to food safety and sanitation. GAP audits are performed through USDA and the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA), and are based on the Food and Drug Administration's "Guide to Minimize Microbial Food Safety Hazards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables" (See Appendix C for more information about GAP and on-farm food safety resources. Visit the PDA website for updated information related to costs and possible cost-share programs). Although GAP certification is not required to sell to private food service operations, its guidelines can help producers improve on-farm food safety, even if producers choose not to become certified.

Labeling Products as Regional and Local

With so many people looking for local products these days, producers may benefit from joining a program or campaign that identifies their products with a regional or local label. The following are several examples:

- *PA Preferred* is run by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture and promotes foods and other products largely or entirely grown and processed in Pennsylvania.
- *The Simply Delicious...Simply Nutritious* campaign specifically promotes fresh produce raised in Pennsylvania.
- *Buy Fresh, Buy Local* is a program organized by the Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture (PASA). It involves state-level promotion of local and sustainable foods, with smaller regional chapters around the state publicizing participating area local producers.

These various regional and local food-labeling programs offer a useful option for growers who want to communicate to customers. Registration for the programs is generally straightforward, and costs are minimal.

SECTION 5: CONCLUSION

Many converging conditions and factors now create fertile ground for developing FTS initiatives in Pennsylvania. The new requirement for school wellness policies, concern about childhood obesity and diabetes, interest in directing public dollars to local and regional businesses, and growing appreciation of the importance of connecting schools and communities all create favorable conditions for FTS efforts in Pennsylvania school districts.

Challenges, of course, exist, both for interested schools and farmers. Some challenges are economic. Others are institutional. There is also the backdrop of federal, state and local policies, as well as regional geography. Farmers and schools must assess the challenges and the existing environment, as they decide together what forms of FTS activity hold the most potential for making effective use of local resources and addressing local needs. Despite these challenges, as the examples described in this guidebook show, schools and farmers can work together in creative and innovative ways to make FTS a reality. And so can you.

This guidebook is a resource for school administrators, nurses, teachers, food service directors and farmers, who want to learn more about the possibilities of farm to school. The most important thing to remember is that it's all about connections. Farm to school programs offer a multi-faceted promise for enhancing connections between schools, communities and the landscape in Pennsylvania.

APPENDIX A: SEASONAL AVAILABILITY OF PENNSYLVANIA PRODUCE¹

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
APPLES												
ASPARAGUS												
BEANS (lima)												
BEANS (snap)												
BEETS												
BLACKBERRIES												
BLUEBERRIES												
BROCCOLI												
CABBAGE												
CANTALOUPE												
CARROTS												
CAULIFLOWER												
CELERY												
CHERRIES (tart)												
CHERRIES (sweet)												
CUCUMBERS												
CORN (sweet)												
EGGPLANT												
LETTUCE												
MUSHROOMS												
NECTARINES												
ONIONS												
PEACHES												
PEARS												
PEAS												
PEPPERS												
PLUMS												
POTATOES												
PUMPKINS												
RASPBERRIES												
SPINACH												
SQUASH (summer)												
SQUASH (winter)												
STRAWBERRIES												
TOMATOES												
TURNIPS												
WATERMELON												

¹ Adapted from data collected by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture. See: www.agriculture.state.pa.us.

APPENDIX B: CURRICULAR AND CLASSROOM RESOURCES TO SUPPORT FARM TO SCHOOL

The following resources are examples of sites that include Pennsylvania agriculture, foods, and nutrition, or provide lesson plans that can easily be adapted to local needs.

Discovering Dairy

www.agriculture.state.pa.us/discoverdairy/site/default.asp?

Run by the Pennsylvania Dairy Promotion Program. Has dairy-centered lesson plans aligned with educational standards in environment and ecology, mathematics, science and technology, food science and nutrition, and much more.

Environment and Ecology, and Science and Technology Standards for K-12 Education in Pennsylvania

www.pde.state.pa.us/k12/lib/k12/envec.pdf and

www.pde.state.pa.us/k12/lib/k12/scitech.pdf

Includes Pennsylvania's environment and ecology standards and science and technology standards. Offers particular connections for FTS initiatives.

The Food Timeline

www.foodtimeline.org/food2a.html

Contains links to lesson plans on food history, diversity, economics, packaging, food as art, styling and advertising, psychology and consumer satisfaction, food science and technology, food in literature, and world hunger. Also contains links to photographs of country-specific foods, historic foods and resource materials on food history, dietary guidelines, and the food pyramid.

Food, Land and People

www.foodlandpeople.org

Provides educational resources focused on the connections between humans and the ecosystem, with a focus on natural resource utilization. Emphasis is placed on understanding natural ecosystems, agriculture and food systems, and the relationships between all of these.

Marketplace for the Mind

www.marketplaceforthemind.state.pa.us

A joint site of the Pennsylvania Departments of Agriculture and Education. Provides information about Pennsylvania agriculture, links and ideas for agricultural projects and activities, and information about professional development opportunities for educators and links to the Pennsylvania educational standards.

National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS)

www.nass.usda.gov/Education_and_Outreach/index.asp

Has an "Educator's Corner" that includes curriculum resources based on the Census of Agriculture and other agricultural-related interdisciplinary class resources. Also has a link to "NASS kids," which provides a list of further educational resources. Some of its links are available in Spanish.

The National Farm-City Council

www.farmcity.org/index.html

Has many fun facts, and a "Tools for the Classroom" section, where educators can order lesson plans and activity sheets about consumer education and other ag-related topics.

Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA)

www.agriculture.state.pa.us/agriculture/cwp/view.asp?a=3&q=126514

In addition to resources for students and educators, provides further links to educational materials, agricultural career information, grants and scholarships information, school lunches and much more.

Pennsylvania Environment and Ecology Education

www.pa3e.ws/component/option,com_frontpage/Itemid,1/

Provides links to professional development opportunities for teachers at the Governor's Institute, as well as a forum for educators to make connections and pose questions to other educators. At times, also provide links to programs run by other organizations, for example, the Pennsylvania Game Commission's Seedlings for Kids and Wildlife Program.

Pennsylvania Farm Bureau's Ag in the Classroom

www.agclassroom.org/index.htm

www.pfb.com/programs/ag-in-the-classroom/links.htm

The first listing provides resources and support for teachers looking for agricultural education information. Also provides fun activities for students to learn about agriculture. The second site listed provides links to lesson plans developed by Ag in the Classroom, as well as applications and information about participation fees for teachers interested in attending Ag in the Classroom training sessions.

Pennsylvania Milk Marketing Board

www.mmb.state.pa.us/mmb/cwp/view.asp?A=3&Q=441787

Contains lesson plans on careers in agriculture, fairs and agritourism, food safety, local dairy industry economic impacts, farmland preservation, calcium, the food pyramid, PA Preferred, Pennsylvania agriculture, and nutrients.

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

National Agricultural Library, Alternative Farming Systems Information Center

www.nal.usda.gov/afsic/

Dedicated to sustainable and organic agriculture. The Education and Research link leads to curricular resources, training links and funding sources. The link for Classroom and Curricula provides a list of several other agricultural education resources.

(continued on next page)

USDA Healthy Meals Resource System

http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/nal_display/index.php?info_center=14&tax_level=1

Provides general nutrition education resources, links to lesson plans centered on school gardens, farm-to-table, plant growth, community nutrition and food systems, and teacher resources for school gardens and nutrition education. Nutrition Education link leads to resources for gardening, fruit and vegetables, grants and much more.

The Vocational Information Center

www.khake.com/page81.html

Provides lesson plans, projects, and activities and teacher resources for agriculture, aquaculture, forestry, animal science, culinary and food science, environment, and horticulture.

APPENDIX C: ORGANIZATIONS AND RESOURCES TO SUPPORT FARM TO SCHOOL

General

All About Apples

www.allaboutapples.com/

Provides education about apples, and promotes apple producers. The organization's website lists more than 2,000 apple orchards throughout the country, including those in Pennsylvania. Local apple orchards can sign up to be listed. Also provides information about apple varieties and lists numerous apple recipes.

Buy Fresh, Buy Local Campaign

www.buylocalpa.org/

Organized by the Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture (PASA), the campaign helps bridge gaps between community farmers and consumers. Website includes a local food guide, a directory of Pennsylvania family farms, farmers' markets, Community Supported Agriculture farms (CSAs), u-pick farms, restaurants, grocers, caterers and bakers, bed and breakfasts, and other businesses that sell locally grown farm products.

Center for Food & Justice (CFJ)

<http://departments.oxy.edu/uepi/cfj/>

Works to improve access to fresh and healthy foods in all communities, especially in disadvantaged communities where access is most limited. This organization also facilitates health and environmental education, as well as community development, social justice, and land use strategies to help build local communities and increase the capacity of small locally based farmers. CFJ's Farm to School Program assists in the development, expansion and evaluation of farm to school programs across the country by providing training and technical assistance to stakeholders including school administrators, food service personnel, farmers, parents, teachers, and community members.

Community Food Security Coalition

www.foodsecurity.org

Comprised of multiple groups and organizations with missions broadly focused around social and economic justice, environmental issues, nutrition, sustainable agriculture, and community development. A central priority is to foster community self-reliance in accessing food and to promote the

growing, manufacturing, processing, availability, and sale of regionally based, sustainably produced food. Website provides a list of tools for organizing farm to school activities, recent FTS publications, possible funding sources, and a link to join the Farm to School email list.

Department of Defense (DoD) Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program

www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/programs/dod/

The program was created as part of a USDA initiative to increase the variety of fresh produce in schools than would otherwise be available through typical USDA purchases. Enables schools to use part of their Group A entitlement money to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables. Schools can apply for this program. Producers may also register with DoD to be listed as a supplier.

Farm to School in the Northeast: Making the Connection for Healthy Kids and Healthy Farms

http://farmtoschool.cce.cornell.edu/files/all/fts_toolkit_oct07_print_version_new_1.pdf

This very detailed and comprehensive 197-page "toolkit" aims to support Northeast extension educators and other community leaders as they develop their skills and plan activities to initiate and strengthen farm to school and farm to college programs in their areas. It is especially useful for training and capacity-building.

The Food Trust (and Kindergarten Initiative Toolkit)

www.thefoodtrust.org/

In operation since 1992 to improve the health of children and adults, promote good nutrition, increase access to nutritious foods, and advocate for better public policy. It is the regional lead agency on FTS for Pennsylvania for the Community Food Security Coalition's National Farm to School Network. It spearheaded the Kindergarten Initiative, which promotes healthy communities by teaching young children and their parents about food, farms and nutrition, and providing healthy fruit and vegetable snacks grown by local farmers.

Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future

www.jhsph.edu/clf/about_clf_new/

www.jhsph.edu/clf/programs/eating/eating_sub/res_gardens.html

www.jhsph.edu/clf/PDF%20Files/Toolkit.pdf

In addition to an informational resource about local food systems, the center also provides details about starting a school garden.

Local Harvest

www.localharvest.org/

Website includes a map for finding local farms and markets and other resources for buying local.

National Farm to School Program

www.farmtoschool.org/

The program is the result of a collaboration between the Center for Food and Justice and the Community Food Security Coalition. Since 2000, it has facilitated the development of farm to school programs across the country. These efforts have included FTS start-ups and fundraising, as well as providing information, education and training for farm to school stakeholders. The website has a resources page with recent farm to school publications, information about possible funding opportunities, involved groups and organizations, and relevant farm to school policy and legislation. The website also lists those states that currently have farm to school programs, as well as contact information for farm to school regional lead agencies.

PA Preferred

www.agriculture.state.pa.us/papreferred/site/default.asp

Program encourages consumers to purchase food grown by Pennsylvania farmers while at the same time promoting high quality standards. Products with the PA Preferred logo means at least 60 percent of the raw product was grown and harvested in the commonwealth, or 100 percent of the final manufacturing process and packaging was done in Pennsylvania.

Pennsylvania Agricultural Map (AgMap)

<http://agmap.psu.edu/>

This online agricultural directory is funded through the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture and maintained by Penn State University to help Pennsylvania agriculture businesses connect to the general public by providing free listings that are easily searchable. Consumers can find the products and services and contact those businesses that would best serve their needs. There are more than 2,835 Pennsylvania agriculture businesses listed on AgMap. AgMap is a good resource for schools that are looking for local producers, and for local producers that want to advertise and have a listing online.

Penn State Cooperative Extension Office

www.extension.psu.edu

Provides outreach educational opportunities to individuals, families, businesses, and communities throughout the commonwealth. Local extension offices can link farmers and schools, as well as provide agricultural education resources for teachers and students.

Pennsylvania Farm Bureau

www.pfb.com/

Provides support services and information to farmers and rural families in Pennsylvania. County Farm Bureaus can help connect farmers and school districts interested in FTS programming.

Pennsylvania Retail Farm Market Association (PaFarm)

www.pafarm.com/

Website provides information about the location of farm markets, and assists in searching for products and services related to retail farm marketing. School districts may be able to buy local fruits and vegetables in bulk from area farm markets. Similarly, they can use this association as a resource for finding local producers.

The Rodale Institute New Farm

www.rodaleinstitute.org/new_farm

A Pennsylvania-based nonprofit organization promoting organic farming methods worldwide to promote a regenerative food system fostering environmental and human health. The “Families” and “Educators” sections of the website provide useful resources to assist in creating and promoting Farm to School programs as well as health, nutrition and environmental programming. The website also includes information about resources for funding.

Simply Delicious...Simply Nutritious Campaign

www.agriculture.state.pa.us/agriculture/cwp/view.asp?q=128586

The campaign promotes the seasonal quality of Pennsylvania’s fresh fruits and vegetables. Part of the PA Preferred Program, the campaign builds recognition of Pennsylvania’s abundant supply of fresh fruits and vegetables and promotes consumer demand through billboard and television advertising campaigns, point-of-sale materials, and public relations activities. The website contains a search for Pennsylvania produce growers.

United State Department of Agriculture (USDA)

www.usda.gov

www.ers.usda.gov/Briefing/ChildNutrition/

Offers a number of grant opportunities to help schools participate in farm to school activities and provides comprehensive information about child nutrition programs, which are designed to provide a nutritional safety net for children.

Especially for Schools

America the Beautiful Fund

www.america-the-beautiful.org/

Assists community-level programs and projects that work to preserve natural and historic environments and improve life quality. The fund provides support and direction to volunteer community projects across all 50 states, and operates as a clearinghouse of ideas for multiple community projects.

National FFA and Pennsylvania FFA Association

www.ffa.org/ and www.paffa.state.pa.us/

Dedicated to promoting agricultural education as a means of developing student potential for leadership, personal growth and career success. FFA has developed the agricultural science education program built on three core areas of classroom/ laboratory instruction, supervised agricultural experience programs, and FFA student organization activities/opportunities. The organization is a good resource for teachers looking to incorporate agricultural education in their curriculum.

The Northeast Regional Food Guide (Cornell Extension)

www.nutrition.cornell.edu/foodguide/archive/index.html

The guide is a nutrition education tool to help consumers choose a nutritious diet, promote health and support an active life. The guide also encourages the consumption of foods grown regionally.

Pennsylvania Nutrition Education Network (PA NEN)

<http://panen.psu.edu/>

Promotes nutrition education and healthful eating practices among low-income consumers. This includes a program that promotes school breakfasts, and receives support from the Mid-Atlantic Dairy Council.

Pennsylvania Advocates for Nutrition and Activity (PANA)

www.nrgbalance.org/

Supports healthier eating and physical activity habits. Among other initiatives, it promotes free, state-wide events, such as Apple Crunch and Go for the Greens, helping schools and communities work together to focus attention on the importance of good nutrition and physical activity.

Apple Crunch Day

<http://panaonline.org/programs/khz/enterthezone/applecrunch/>

Features apple-oriented events and activities encouraging youth and families to make apples, as well as other fruits and vegetables, a regular part of a nutritious diet and an energy-balanced lifestyle. With its overall message of making healthful food choices easily available, this celebration encourages schools to serve apples on this day, often purchased directly from local farmers.

Go for the Greens

<http://panaonline.org/programs/khz/enterthezone/gogreen/index.php>

Promotes vegetables as good food through fun educational activities including taste-testing, trivia contests, increased menu offerings, recipe competitions, and other vegetable-based games, activities, and lessons.

National 4H and Pennsylvania 4H

www.4husa.org/ and <http://pa4h.cas.psu.edu/>

Promotes leadership, citizenship, and life skills for young people. Contact your local Penn State Cooperative Extension Office to learn more about 4-H opportunities for students and possible classroom projects.

Project PA: Best Practices Manual

http://nutrition.psu.edu/projectpa/html/bpmanual/BP_Manual_link_2.html <http://nutrition.psu.edu/projectpa/2007Style/index.html>

Collaboration between Penn State University's Department of Nutritional Sciences and the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Division of Food and Nutrition. Project PA partners with schools and communities to provide nutrition education and promote healthy eating behaviors among children.

School Nutrition Association

www.schoolnutrition.org/

This national, non-profit professional organization is a good resource for food service directors or anyone who wants to understand the challenges of school food service.

Society for Nutrition Education

www.sne.org/

Promotes healthful, sustainable food choices. SNE provides forums for sharing strategies for nutrition education and disseminating research findings. Members provide informational resources to individuals, families, fellow professionals, and students, and work to influence policy makers around a variety of nutrition, food, and health issues.

Especially for Farmers

American Farmland Trust

www.farmland.org/default.asp

A nonprofit membership organization dedicated to protecting strategic agricultural resources. It was founded in 1980 by farmers and conservationists concerned with the loss of farmland to development.

North American Farmers' Direct Marketing Association (NAFDMA)

www.nafdma.com/

A non-profit trade association promoting the direct marketing farm industry. Members include farmers, farmers' market managers, extension agents, industry suppliers, and government officials who are involved in agritourism, on-farm retail, farmers' markets, pick your own, and community-supported agriculture. NAFDMA is a good networking tool for farmers.

Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture (PASA)

www.pasafarming.org/

A nonprofit organization that works to improve the economic, environmental and social sustainability of Pennsylvania food and agricultural systems. PASA works with farmers, consumers, and others concerned with the ecological well being of the environment and natural resources. It builds networks and markets that strengthen the links between consumers and family farmers, and can help link school districts with local producers.

Pennsylvania Vegetables Growers Association (PVGA)

www.pvga.org/

Assists Pennsylvania's commercial vegetable, potato and berry growers through education, research, and advocacy. PVGA provides educational resources and opportunities for its members, supports applied research, and promotes growers and their products. PVGA may be able to help school districts make contact with PVGA members interested in selling to school food services.

Pennsylvania Women's Ag Network (PA-WAGN)

<http://wagn.cas.psu.edu/>

Supports women in agriculture by providing educational, networking, and empowerment opportunities. Members include women farmers, agricultural professionals, and educators committed to supporting and providing educational opportunities to women working in agriculture and ag-related businesses.

USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service Alternative Farming Systems Information Center

www.ams.usda.gov

www.nal.usda.gov/afsic/

The first link provides producers with resources about grading, organic agriculture, commodity purchasing for the National School Lunch Program, wholesale markets and much more. The second link contains information about alternative marketing practices, which includes direct marketing, value-added products, farm business planning and management and more.

Sustaining Pennsylvania Agriculture

http://susag.cas.psu.edu/grant_opportunities.htm

Includes a list of grant resources. The site is sponsored by Penn State Cooperative Extension.

Good Agricultural Practices and Other Food Safety Information

**Cornell University Department of Food Science
Good Agricultural Practices Network for Education and Training**

www.gaps.cornell.edu/index.html

Includes farm and food safety educational materials; the

National GAP Educational Material, "Food Safety Begins on the Farm," is a good introduction to the purpose and requirements of GAP certification. Guidelines relate to all aspect of farm production, including irrigation, harvesting and post-harvest handling.

Federal Drug Administration's Guide to Minimize Microbial Food Safety Hazards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/prodguid.html

Contains very specific guidelines that were issued in 1998 by the FDA to help producers reduce risk of microbial contamination, and are meant to be modified according to each farm operation's needs. For help interpreting these guidelines, visit either Penn State or Cornell's GAP homepage.

Federal Drug Administration's Guide to Minimize Microbial Food Safety Hazards for Fresh-Cut Fruits and Vegetables

www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/prodgui4.html

These 2008 guidelines expand on the FDA's current good manufacturing practices in manufacturing, packing or holding human food, which provides very broad handling guidelines. The document covers fresh cut produce.

Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture Fresh Products Audit Verification Program (GAP/GHP)

[www.agriculture.state.pa.us/agriculture/cwp/](http://www.agriculture.state.pa.us/agriculture/cwp/view.asp?a=3&q=143713)

[view.asp?a=3&q=143713](http://www.agriculture.state.pa.us/agriculture/cwp/view.asp?a=3&q=143713)

Contains a link to the audit request form, as well as the cost share application form.

Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Food Safety & Laboratory Services

[www.agriculture.state.pa.us/agriculture/cwp/](http://www.agriculture.state.pa.us/agriculture/cwp/view.asp?q=126850)

[view.asp?q=126850](http://www.agriculture.state.pa.us/agriculture/cwp/view.asp?q=126850)

Information regarding general food safety requirements; see specifically the section on "Wholesale/Manufacturing/Processing Food Establishments" for information on Home Food Processor Guidelines, which apply to most small-scale, on-farm processed items (such as canned or baked goods).

Penn State's Food Safety Throughout the Food System

<http://foodsafety.psu.edu/>

In addition to general food safety information, this site provides a link to a Good Agricultural Practices site that helps farmers understand food safety at the farm level. It provides educational resources, national GAP standards, and steps to form a farm food safety plan, as well as links to third party auditors. The main food safety site also provides information for home processing.

APPENDIX D: GRANTS AND FUNDING IDEAS

General Grant Programs

Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program

www.attra.ncat.org/guide/a_m/community_food.html
www.attra.ncat.org/guide/n_z/rcdg.html
www.csrees.usda.gov/nea/food/in_focus/hunger_if_competitive.html

Funded by USDA, and focused on supporting community initiatives around food security, including issues of access, self-reliance, and other food, farm and nutrition issues. One of its goals is to foster activities that benefit both low-income consumers and agricultural producers. As with many grant programs, the strongest applicants are those that can create a coalition of stakeholders.

Healthy Farms Healthy Schools Grant Program

www.agriculture.state.pa.us/agriculture/cwp/view.asp?a=3&Q=144973

As authorized by Act 184 of 2006, the program is designed to help educate kindergartners and their families about healthful food choices and local agriculture. It aims to improve the health of students and their families, as well as provide new marketing opportunities for Pennsylvania farmers. The grant process is open to any Pennsylvania school district, charter school or private school with a kindergarten program. This one-year grant requires some matching funds, so finding local funding and support is vital.

Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program (SARE) Sustainable Community Grants

www.uvm.edu/%7EEnesare/grants_scomm.htm

These grants are meant for projects that bring together diverse community members in an effort to improve the quality of life in rural areas.

General Foundations

Local and Community Foundations

Many foundations that are local, or community based, aim to fund projects within a specific area. These types of foundations can be good resources for funding start-ups and special projects. The Directory of Pennsylvania Foundations (available at public libraries in the business reference section) is a great way to find these local foundations. Some of these include national foundations that have headquarters in Pennsylvania, and some that are region specific within the state (for example, the Pew Charitable Trust, the Annenberg Foundation, the Mellon Foundation, the Penn Foundation, the Heinz Foundation, etc). There are also online resources for locating community foundations, such as the Council of Foundations at www.cof.org/Locator/.

The Foundation Center

<http://foundationcenter.org/>

This website is a resource for finding funding directories and local foundations. It also has tools to help people learn about fundraising. The foundation center has 10 sites throughout Pennsylvania (in Bethlehem, Erie, Harrisburg, Lancaster, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Pittston, Reading, Williamsport and York), where individuals can go to learn more about special foundations and corporate giving in their region.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

www.rwjf.org/grants/

This foundation puts out requests for proposals to address different program areas. One of the program areas is childhood obesity, which farm to school programs often help to address.

W.K. Kellogg Foundation

www.wkcf.org

The foundation funds community projects that support children and families, and has a special section for funding sustainable and regional food systems.

Local Governments

Some city or county agencies are potential resources that are worth investigating. Departments that deal with community development, anti-hunger or school and youth programs are especially likely to have some funding set aside for special projects. Elected officials may have discretionary funds that they can use for projects in their districts.

Corporate Donors

The Directory of Pennsylvania Foundations can help to locate regional corporate donations. A list of other possible corporate donors can be found at www.unc.edu/depts/msen/dev/grants.html. Possible corporate donors include WalMart, Toshiba, Dow Chemical, and Coca-Cola. It is important to remember that local businesses, such as regional banks or healthcare providers, can support community activities and be a great resource.

Especially for Schools

American Cancer Society

www.cancer.org

With its emphasis on healthy living, the society has helped many schools to promote and fund wellness activities.

Hidden Valley Love Your Veggies Grant

http://loveyourveggies.com/school_grants.php

Hidden Valley will award \$10,000 grants to one school in each state to support better access to and increased consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables.

Lowe's Toolbox for Education Grant Program

www.toolboxforeducation.com/index.html

The grant program funds various school-based projects, including gardens and other environmental initiatives.

National Gardening Association

<http://assoc.garden.org/about/>

Includes resources and grants for school gardens.

Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture—Agricultural and Rural Youth Grant Program

www.agriculture.state.pa.us/agriculture/cwp/view.asp?a=3&q=128614

These grants are for projects involving children younger than 18 and focusing on rural and agricultural issues. Direct grants of \$2,500 are available, as well as matching grants of up to \$10,000. Funding can be for educational activities, including field trips or other agricultural activities.

Pennsylvania Council on the Arts

www.pacouncilonthearts.org/pca.cfm?id=3&level=First
Funds "Artist in Education Residencies," which provide matching grants for projects working with Pennsylvania artists. Example projects include garden flags, nature masks, stream/water themes, vegetable/flower/insect plywood collage, and a food/hunger theme.

Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection Environmental Education Grants Program

www.dep.state.pa.us/grantscenter/ProgramSummary.asp?ID=57

This grant programs funds environmental education in schools.

The Philly Orchard Project

www.phillyorchards.org/

This organization is available to help plan and fund the planting of orchards around the city of Philadelphia as both a way to beautify neighborhoods and provide a community food source.

Toyota Tapestry Grants for Teachers

www.nsta.org/pd/tapestry/index.htm

This grant program is for innovative science-related educational activities.

USDA Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP)

www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/FFVP/FFVPdefault.htm

www.pde.state.pa.us/food_nutrition/

USDA provides funding to 25 schools in each state to provide fruit and vegetables to students outside of the regular lunch program. The snack program is intended to increase children's fruit and vegetable consumption for their better health and introduce them to different types of fruits and vegetables through educational activities. In Pennsylvania, the program is

administered by the Department of Education. The application process is competitive, although funds are allocated by building, not by district, so that more than one school building in each district can apply. Funding is limited to schools that participate in the National School Lunch Program, and a majority of the 25 schools that are chosen must have 50 percent or more of their student body eligible for free or reduced price meals. Finding a non-federal resource partnership is key to fulfilling the requirements of the program, since there is a limit on the percent of funding that can be used on labor, and none can go to promotional items.

Especially for Farmers**AMS Federal-State Marketing Improvement Program**

www.ams.usda.gov/

These grants are awarded to state-sponsored marketing projects. Funded programs include those that address state or regional issues, although projects that may serve as pilots are also considered. Projects that encourage collaboration between the farm sector and other stakeholders are encouraged.

Keystone Development Center

www.kdc.coop

This regional, non-profit corporation provides technical assistance for cooperative business ventures. Its services include feasibility studies, market analysis, business plan development and other resources to help develop and support cooperative businesses.

Northeast SARE-Farmer Grant Program

www.uvm.edu/%7Enesare/FGinfo.html

This grant program funds new sustainable techniques and innovative ideas that are initiated by producers.

Rural Cooperative Development Grant Program (RCDG)

www.attra.ncat.org/guide/n_z/rcdg.html

www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs

These grants help to start and run cooperatives to improve rural development.

Value-Added Producer Grants

www.attra.ncat.org/guide/n_z/value_added.html

Formerly known as the Value-Added Development Grants Program, this program is offered by the Rural Business Cooperative Service at USDA. Examples of added-value include physically processing a product, valuing the production method (such as certified organic), or separating it from the commodity market (for example with identity preserved marketing systems).

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The Center for Rural Pennsylvania
200 North Third St., Suite 600
Harrisburg, PA 17101
Phone: (717) 787-9555
Fax: (717) 772-3587
www.ruralpa.org
1P1108-750